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# Clayton County

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## Clayton County

[During the winter 1858-1859, Jesse Clement, a co-founder with Dr. George G. Lyon of the daily and weekly DUBUQUE TIMES, made a series of trips over northeastern Iowa within a radius of 200 miles of Dubuque. These trips were made primarily by stagecoach, by Mississippi steamboat, and to a lesser degree by the newly constructed railroads. Printed in both the weekly and daily TIMES, Clement provided a detailed first hand account of scores of Iowa communities. A keen observer, an accurate recorder, and imbued with a good sense of humor, Clement has left a fine record of Clayton and Allamakee Counties on the eve of the Civil War. The more obvious typographical errors have been corrected; the full names (including initials) of individuals have been supplied whenever possible. The inconsistencies of punctuation, capitalization, and spelling have been left unchanged. THE EDITOR.]

*Guttenberg*

February 14, 1859

Left Dubuque this morning on our third Winter trip into the interior of Iowa. We took the Dubuque and Garnavillo mail line of stages, C. Scripture proprietor, and came through a distance of forty miles, in a little more than six hours, stopping six times to change the mail, and three quarters of an hour to dine. The sleighing could not be better; the horses were in fine trim, and Mr. J. T. Upham, the driver the first thirty-two miles, was anxious to get to the end of his day's drive that he might enjoy the luxury of a change of linen. Mr. Scripture was so considerate as to send out three buffalo robes—something of which some mail carriers and stage proprietors who run out of Dubuque do not think.

The route from Dubuque to Guttenberg, leads



through a timbered and mineral country most of the way. Some part of it is through deep ravines, with bluffs, composed of solid masses of limestone, towering, here and there, to sublime heights. Between Jefferson and Millville is a strip of country more level; and it is about as beautiful as any we have seen this winter.

The farmers in and around Jefferson and Concord must be thrifty, judging by the soil which they cultivate.

The happiest things which we have seen to-day, were a flock of ducks at Durango, taking their morning bath in a little pond longside a copious spring. The waters gush out of the earth so warm as never to freeze and the ducks seemed perfectly jubilant while bathing in them. We met rational beings to-day, less thoughtful than the plumed aquatics; they had forgotten to wash their faces and hands—*consequently* they were less happy than the ducks.

Halting at Millville, several miles South of Guttenberg long enough to get dinner at the hotel of Mr. J. C. Husentter, we took a few, a very few, notes of the place. It is located on the Turkey river, and in a narrow valley with large bluffs on either side of it. There is some water power at that point, and Millville has two grist mills, making it a place of resort for many farmers in the neighborhood. There is one store in the place, also two or three machine shops. William Smith is the Jus-



tice of the Peace, and Charles W. Richardson the Attorney. There is no physician nearer than Guttenberg. The population of Millville is less than one hundred. How long its "day of small things" is to remain, time must determine.

The descent into Guttenberg from the south, is down a very steep bluff, towering to mountainous proportions, and as one looks upon the young city, squat upon the shore of the "father of waters," it seems to have sprung up by enchantment upon the wild beach. He sees a limestone city standing where the Sac and Fox Indians planted their corn but a few years ago.

Guttenberg is beautifully situated directly on the west bank of the Mississippi, about six miles above the mouth of the Turkey river. Its site is somewhat similar to that of Winona, Minnesota, it being on a beach prairie. It extends from the base of the bluff half or three-fourths of a mile eastward to the river, and three miles up and down its margin. Mr. John McBride informs us that the prairie forming the site of the town received from one of the early French missionaries who were once stationed here, the name of *Prairie la Porte*, or *Door Prairie*. With this French name it was laid out about twenty-one years ago, and became the seat of justice of Clayton county—then a part of Wisconsin Territory. We are told that the first term of the District Court was held here in a log house, in May, 1838. The county seat was migrat-



ed more than once since then, and has found its way back to Prairie la Porte, alias Guttenberg, while the little one has become a thousand—multiplied by about  $2\frac{1}{4}$ . In fact, Guttenberg has become a city, with its Mayor and Aldermen, and other dignitaries. His honor, Mayor G. F. Wiest, is said to be an excellent man. He is temporarily absent from town. He is the proprietor of an extensive hardware establishment, and in his absence his wife, who has great business tact, has the supervision of the mercantile house. In fact, we believe she is her husband's partner! G. Falkenhaimer & Brothers have also a large hardware and hollow ware store.

Among the general variety stores in this city, are those of Messrs. Morris Fleck & Brother, John Schmees & Henry Schutte, Wm. Sullivan, Kiesel & Co., C. F. Lanprecht, and J. G. Keisel. The store of Fleck & Brother is twenty-five feet wide and one hundred deep. They have also an immense stone warehouse on the levee, containing 100 hogsheads of bacon, with 1,000 pounds in each, 25,000 pounds of lard, 3,000 bushels of corn, 1,000 barrels of flour, and 100,000 pounds of mineral. Fleck & Brother have also a steam flouring mill built of stone, which cost \$24,000. It has four run of burrs, and is in all respects a superior mill.

Schmees & Schutte are engaged in the forwarding and commission business, as well as in dry



goods, groceries, &c., and have a fine location on the levee. Mr. Sullivan, whose name and business we have mentioned, is making arrangements to erect a large brick store in the spring. Ihm & Weimer have a large store of well assorted groceries, &c. Hotinger and L. Heine, and C. F. Class, have drug stores, almost equal in size to any in Dubuque.

Otto Kramer and Charles Scherling have a couple of large harness shops on the street fronting on the levee; and almost every store and mechanic shop in that street wears the air of thrift and of a commercial town.—About thirty rods of continuous levee have been built in the most substantial manner, aside from one or two other lesser strips, made by private enterprise. Messrs. Fleck & Brother have a fine landing place in front of their mammoth warehouse.

We find in Guttenberg the requisite number of shoe, cabinet, wagon and other shops, and an industrious set of mechanics. There are also three breweries here, a flouring mill, a steam saw mill, and five or six hotels. We are stopping at the City Hotel, kept by Henry Eveslage, a clever German, for many years a resident of Cincinnati. We hear the Union House, D. E. Mayer, proprietor, highly praised.

There are three public schools in the city, two English and one German. As the name of the place might indicate, it is principally settled by Ger-



mans, the civil engineers, as Charles Kingsley calls them, of the mental world. They are a nation of thinkers from the profoundest metaphysician down to the wood sawer. Some of the Germans of Guttenberg, as our notes would indicate, are as enterprising as the "livest" Yankee "out West."

The churches in this city are Catholic and Lutheran. There are not enough families of any one other denomination to form an organization—an indication of the strength of the foreign population. The physicians are D. P. Grinter, Wm. Hoffbauer, Geo. Weber, and W. Wanecke; the lawyers, Alpheus Scott, and William Potter. To Mr. Scott we are indebted for much information, and for other favors. J. P. Kriebs, Esq., the postmaster, is well known in Dubuque, of which place he was a resident for several years. He and Jacob Nichlaus and J. Schroeder, are the Justices of the Peace.

The Clayton County *Journal*, the official paper of the county, is published at Guttenberg, and is Republican in politics, Alpheus Scott, proprietor. It is edited by W. F. Howard, Esq., formerly of Carroll, Chautauque county, New York. When at Strawberry Point, in this county, a few days ago, we began to surmise that Clayton county, Iowa, must be the western edition of Chautauque county, New York.

Considering the mineral resources of Guttenberg, the agricultural wealth of the townships to



the westward, and the excellent facilities for shipping at this point, we see no reason why a brilliant future does not await it.

*Garnavillo*

February 16, 1859

Garnavillo is in the second tier of townships from the Mississippi, and on what is called high prairie, the village plat being four hundred and eighty feet above the level of the river. It was neutral ground between the Sacs and Foxes, and Winnebagoes in 1836, when the first settler came here. Dr. Frederick Andros, the pioneer, noted his advent by marking a tree with black paint, January 6, 1836, and the mark is still visible. The tree is a mile or two from the village. The Doctor built the first log cabin erected here, immediately on his arrival. He was followed by John W. Gillett, who still lives in this neighborhood. In the winter of 1837-38, there was an attack near this place by the Sac and Fox Indians, on the Winnebagoes, and thirty-seven of the latter were killed.

Game was very plenty here twenty years ago. Dr. Andros thinks he has seen as many as one hundred elk at one time near the site of Garnavillo. Deer and turkeys were also abundant.

High Prairie now has a lovely village of about three hundred inhabitants, and is dotted all over with farm houses, many of which are surrounded by a profusion of shade trees and other indices of enterprise and taste.—Some of the best farms



which we have seen in nearly a thousand miles travel this winter in Northern Iowa, are within a mile or two of Garnavillo.

We find three mercantile houses here, the proprietors being C. W. Rogers & Hill, and D. H. Meyer. Drs. John Linton & D. M. Reed are the druggists, and they, with Mr. Andros, are the physicians of the place. The lawyers are Samuel Murdock, J. O. Crosby, and R. S. S. Andros. Mr. Crosby is an old acquaintance of ours, from Western New York, and is a brilliant man. We are indebted to him for an excellent map of Clayton county—one of his own getting up.

The harness maker is J. W. Drips, who, with half a dozen other citizens of the place, sighing for a view of the new Pisgah of the West—Pike's Peak. Nothing will cure any of them, probably, but a strong dose of Cherry (Creek) bitters.

There are four shoe shops in Garnavillo, and two wagon and two blacksmith shops. We find also a silversmith here, a gunsmith, a dentist, a cabinet maker, a tailor, and two milliners.

A magnificent hotel, already enclosed, is to be completed in the spring, and Mr. Crosby and two or three other citizens of the place, are erecting fine brick dwelling houses. There are two good saw mills and a flouring mill on Buck Creek, two miles from Garnavillo. The foundation of a magnificent high school building has been laid in the village.



There is but one hotel here—the Garnavillo House, kept by J. H. Nietert, who has a good run of custom, and needs a larger house.

The schools of the place are, a public (English) school, a private German school, and the Clayton county High School. The last named school is taught by Mr. J. Briggs, formerly of Springville, Erie county, New York. We have known him for fifteen years. It is doubtful if there are better teachers in this county.

The churches of Garnavillo are, Methodist, G. Larkin, pastor; Congregational, L. P. Mathews, pastor; and Catholic and Lutheran. Mr. Larkin has just closed a protracted meeting, which has been held for four weeks, and something like fifty additions, he informs us, have been made to this Methodist Church. He resides at National, six miles northwest, where he has another charge.

We are happy to meet here Mr. Jas. Davis, the Sheriff of Clayton county. His residence is about three miles south of this village. He has done his share toward making pleasant our first visit to the county seat, *whilom*, of Clayton.

We meet here also Mr. Alonzo Brown, the County Superintendent of Public Instruction, an active man in the cause of education. We learn from him that there are about eighty-five common schools in the county, and several select schools; that the new law works well, and that there is increased interest in educational matters . . .



While we are writing here in Garnavillo, a large funeral procession is passing through town. Two evenings since, as Mr. F. Brooker, who lives a mile and a half southeast of this village, was on his way home, the sleigh was tipped over, throwing out three children. One of them, about three years old, was so much injured that he died the same night. —He did not appear at first to be seriously hurt, and was put to bed seemingly in comfortable circumstances. He died without a struggle.

*Elkader*

February 17, 1859

Located on both sides of the Turkey river, in the midst of a young growth of timber, with high banks on either side, also lined with young oaks and other beautiful trees; blessed with the perpetual and untiring music of a water fall, and during more than half of the year with the caroling of gay forest minstrels; blessed, like Garnavillo, whence we last wrote, with a salubrious atmosphere and all the comforts of health. Elkader, rural and enrapturing, is an inviting place to the man of enterprise, and to the pilgrim who, like ourself, halts but a day. The first settlers here were Elisha Boardman and H. D. Brownson. Mr. Boardman is a native of Connecticut, and first looked upon this lovely spot in July, in 1836. When on his way hither from Cassville, Wisconsin, with three other persons, he had his horses stolen by the Winnebagoes, near Fort Atkinson. He being



lame, it was necessary to construct a raft in order to reach this point. The party were four days in making it and in getting here. Meantime they were out of provisions, and having but one very poor gun, they suffered with hunger. Game was plenty, and at one time, Mr. Boardman tells us, he counted forty elks. He had trials almost equal to those of Tantalus. There was wild meat in "gunshot" of him, and his comrades in hunger, but they could not secure it. A matronly coon, with the cares of a family upon her, was killed, but Mr. Boardman preferred to fast two days rather than eat her strong meat. Mr. B. was the first man to move his family to the Turkey river. The second year after he came here, the Indians stole his oxen, and he was obliged to send to Missouri for another pair. Such are the trials of frontier life.

Mr. Boardman lives on the spot where he pitched his wilderness tent, more than twelve years ago; and he now finds himself in the midst of an industrious community numbering about 480 souls. His age is seventy-eight. One of the townships in this county is named for him. At his house this morning we also met Mr. Brownson, who must be nearly of the same age. They are *the* patriarchs of Elkader. Grandfathers are scarce on the Turkey. Elkader, we *guess*, can show hands with any of the towns, "on this score."

Mr. Boardman built a saw mill several years ago, in Reed township on Dry Mill Creek, and the



night before he was to have commenced sawing logs, the water disappeared! Like some foolish young men, it run itself into the ground! It is not known that the water ever run out again.

In 1838 Mr. Boardman and half a dozen other settlers, finding a panther in a cave of rocks, near this village, succeeded, after two days' trial, in smoking the animal to death. They did it by building fires in the mouth of the cave, then stopping it up and forcing the smoke inward. The animal was about eighteen feet from the mouth of the cave, in a chamber nearly four feet square. The mouth of the cave was about the size of a man's body. The dying agonies of the poor animal were terrible.

Elkader has one of the best water powers in Clayton county, and one of the best flouring mills, the property of Davis & Thompson. Mr. Davis is a son of the present member of Congress from this District. Mr. Thompson does not reside here. Their mill has four run of burrs, and is a huge stone structure, destined, no doubt, to outlast its enterprising proprietors. The walls of the lower story are four and a half feet thick. This mill was built in 1849, and for five or six years was the only mill in the county, with the exception of here and there an humble corn cracker. It being directly between the producer and the consumer, it did in its early days an immense amount of business. It can make three hundred barrels of flour in a day. It has ground a great many comforts for



the early and poor settlers, but their faces never.

Less than one-fourth of the water power is used, and Elkader presents a fine opening for persons who wish to start paper mills or cloth factories. If any of our readers are desirous of engaging in such an enterprise, let them take a glance at this point. Elkader possesses the elements of manly growth. She has not seen her best days.

We find here five general variety stores, kept by Carter & Co., S. Ellsworth, D. Howes, P. Keenan, and V. Boler. That of Carter & Co. is very large, and has a great variety of goods. A. Warner & Co. have an excellent drug store, in the rear of which are the rooms of Mr. W. M. Keys, a skillful daguerreotypist, who seems to be doing a first rate business. The other mechanics of the place are, one jeweler, one tinsmith, one cooper, two harness makers, two cabinet makers, two wagon makers, three blacksmiths, four shoe makers, and about half a dozen boss carpenters.

There is one hotel in Elkader—E. Boardman, Jr., proprietor—a first class village inn, as everybody says, but Hon. Henry B. Carter, late State Senator, a munificent man and sumptuous entertainer, has given us no opportunity to test the virtues of the public house. The *best* house we have found as yet in Clayton county is the *Carter* house, though of this fact we would not advertise to the public, lest too many travelers should trouble Mrs. Carter—as we have done.



The churches of Elkader are Catholic, Congregational, United Brethren, and Methodist. The first two societies mentioned have houses of worship. The Congregational house is a neat little octagonal building, unique, and tastily arranged within. We heard Rev. Mr. Dennis of Dubuque, preach an instructive and able discourse in it last evening, from the text, "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath." We also hear a temperance lecture, which he delivered here two evenings since, very highly praised. He left for Dubuque early this morning.

The physicians of Elkader are A. Warner and J. A. Blanchard. Lawyers we find not.

Elkader has two public schools, taught by Mr. W. Mussey and his sister, Mrs. Preston. Mr. M. has the larger scholars, and teaches on the east side of the river; Mrs. P., the smaller, and teaches on the west side. Both schools appear unusually well. A juvenile Society called the "Bank of Hope," is doing much both for the mental and moral improvement of the young.

#### *Clayton Center*

In our notes of Clayton county, we have not, as yet, spoken of Clayton Center, a village through which we passed two days ago, on our way from Garnavillo to Elkader. It is five miles east of the latter town, and on Dry Mill Branch. It has a saw mill, a Lutheran church with a European air about



it, two stores, half a dozen mechanic shops, a brick-yard and a lime kiln. We halted at the "Traveler's Home for dinner," but seeing an uncounted host of small children in the principal room of the house and the landlord making shoes, we concluded that we were not hungry, and that, if we *were*, it would be sinful to trouble any one to cook for us until the children's faces and hands were washed. We believe that every man should eat his peck of dirt, but not at one meal!

*North McGregor (Marquette)*

February 19, 1859

We left the hospitable village of Elkader very early this morning, coming through to McGregor, a distance of eighteen miles, before breakfast. It being extremely foggy most of the way, we saw but little of the country, which is *reported* to be fertile. Such we should infer is the case from the fact that it is well settled, and the farm houses, where we could see them through the fog, wore the appearance of thrift.

The first thing done here, after eating a late yet excellent breakfast at the McGregor House, was to get into a buggy with J. T. Stoneman, Esq., a member of high standing of the Clayton county bar, and take a survey of the country, and more particularly of North McGregor, a new town one mile north of the old. A road has been built from one town to the other on the side of the bluff, directly



on the shore of the Mississippi. As we passed over this road this forenoon, we found several persons, a few rods above town, engaged in fishing up a horse and wagon, which a lad assured us had been "drowned." Evidently such was the case with the horse, for we saw him, on our return, lying dead upon the ice. The wagon also was taken out of the water; but we are not quite prepared to say that it was "drowned." One horse was saved. The team was the property of David Freeman, of this place. A load of coal, which caused the accident, is at the bottom of the river. The ice at this point shows the effects of the recent thaw, and it is not considered very safe crossing to-day—though teams are constantly passing between McGregor and Prairie du Chien.

North McGregor has sprung up as palaces did, by enchantment, in the *days* of the "*Arabian Nights*." It is about eleven months old, yet has several business houses open, from twelve to fifteen others ready for the spring trade, and between forty and fifty dwelling houses completed. Most of them are occupied, and the infant town has something like three hundred people. It has three hotels, and one of them, the Mondell House, owned by E. W. Mondell, is large and fine looking. We also notice a warehouse more than a hundred feet in length, the property of Moncrief & Co. A large white school house, used also for church purposes, is hugging the bluff, a few rods from the



river. A Presbyterian Church, we are told, is to be erected in the spring. A large foundry, the property of Thompson and King, is in process of erection, and a steam grist and saw mill and a steam sash, door and blind factory, are already in operation. There are also several mechanic shops, two stores, and a good livery stable.

The proprietors of North McGregor are Brown & McCraney. Mr. Orlando McCraney was once a resident of Dubuque, and an old "typo" at that. He edited the *Telegraph*, a campaign paper, in 1848, and worked hard for "Old Zach." He afterwards sold out to the publisher of the *Tribune*. He has found some "fat matter" at North McGregor—and it's good enough for him!

Before his death, Alexander McGregor willed to the proprietors of North McGregor five thousand dollars to build a road to Monona, twelve miles west, and the first installment of that money is to be expended the coming spring. The McGregor Railroad bears northward one mile from the old town, and leaves the river at North McGregor. A channel has been cut, through which boats run from North McGregor directly across the river to Prairie du Chien.

Eventually, North McGregor will be swallowed up by the expanding corporation limits of the old town—old by comparison, but young in fact. Of McGregor proper, fast and flourishing, we shall have occasion to speak in a day or two. From



such a smart town, and from such social people as we find here, it is not simple to hurry away.

Three years ago, McGregor had less than three hundred inhabitants; it now has two thousand, and is growing more rapidly than any town which we have visited this winter. Aside from North McGregor, which is not embraced in the corporate limits of the old town, nearly a hundred buildings of all kinds, were put up during the dull year, 1858, and to-day we notice a score of stores and houses under way. The hammer, the saw and the fore plane, are not idle and useless implements in this young and ambitious town, even in the most lifeless winter which Iowa has seen since she became a sovereign commonwealth. One year ago, but a few thousand, or rather *hundred* dollars were paid out here for pork and other provisions; now McGregor affords a first-class market for these things. Something like seventy thousand dollars, it is estimated, have been paid out for hogs alone during the last three months.—Messrs. Evans & Egbert, Teabout & Olsen, Bradley & Co., Allen & Southmayd, and S. M. Hibbard, only five houses, have paid out forty thousand dollars for this one article.—Messrs. Evans & Egbert, who bought on commission for a Chicago house, have purchased this winter \$21,000 worth of hogs, \$4,000 of hides, \$5,000 of oats and corn, and \$6,000 of furs, an aggregate of \$36,000.—Teabout & Olsen have bought, of hogs, \$14,990 worth, of beef





*Margery Goergen Photo*

Mississippi Towboat Passing under Lansing Bridge.



*Margery Goergen Photo*

The Mississippi from McGregor Heights.





*McGregor Historical Society*

The McGregor Hook and Ladder Company, No. 1, was organized and incorporated in 1872 with 30 members. Costly fires in downtown McGregor (28 buildings destroyed in 1865 alone) led to the passage of an ordinance requiring that future downtown business structures be of brick or stone construction.



*McGregor Historical Society*

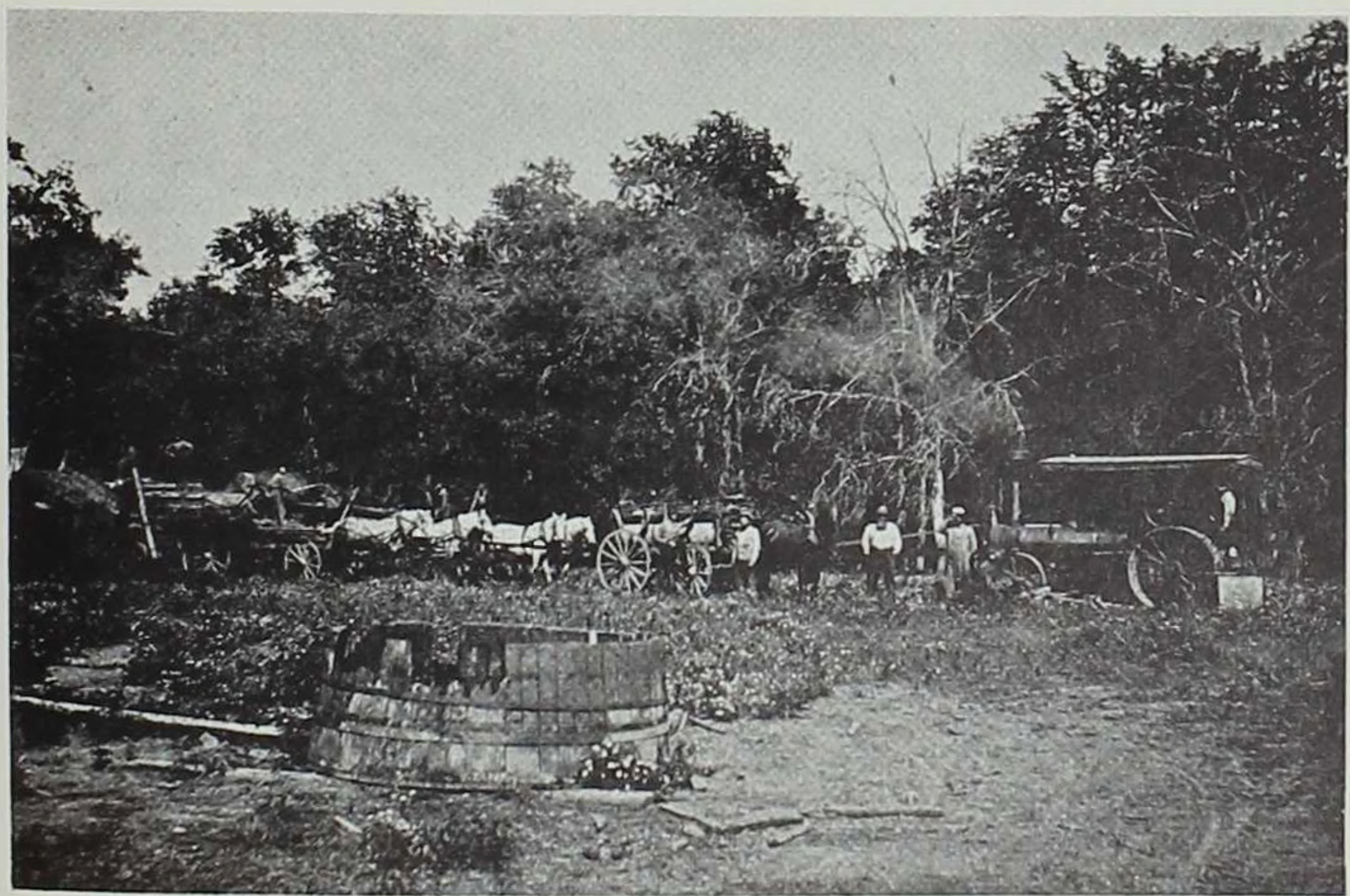
Looking down the main street of McGregor—the “Pocket City” of Iowa—in the 1880's. Traffic was heavy in those horse and buggy days.





*Guttenberg Press Photo*

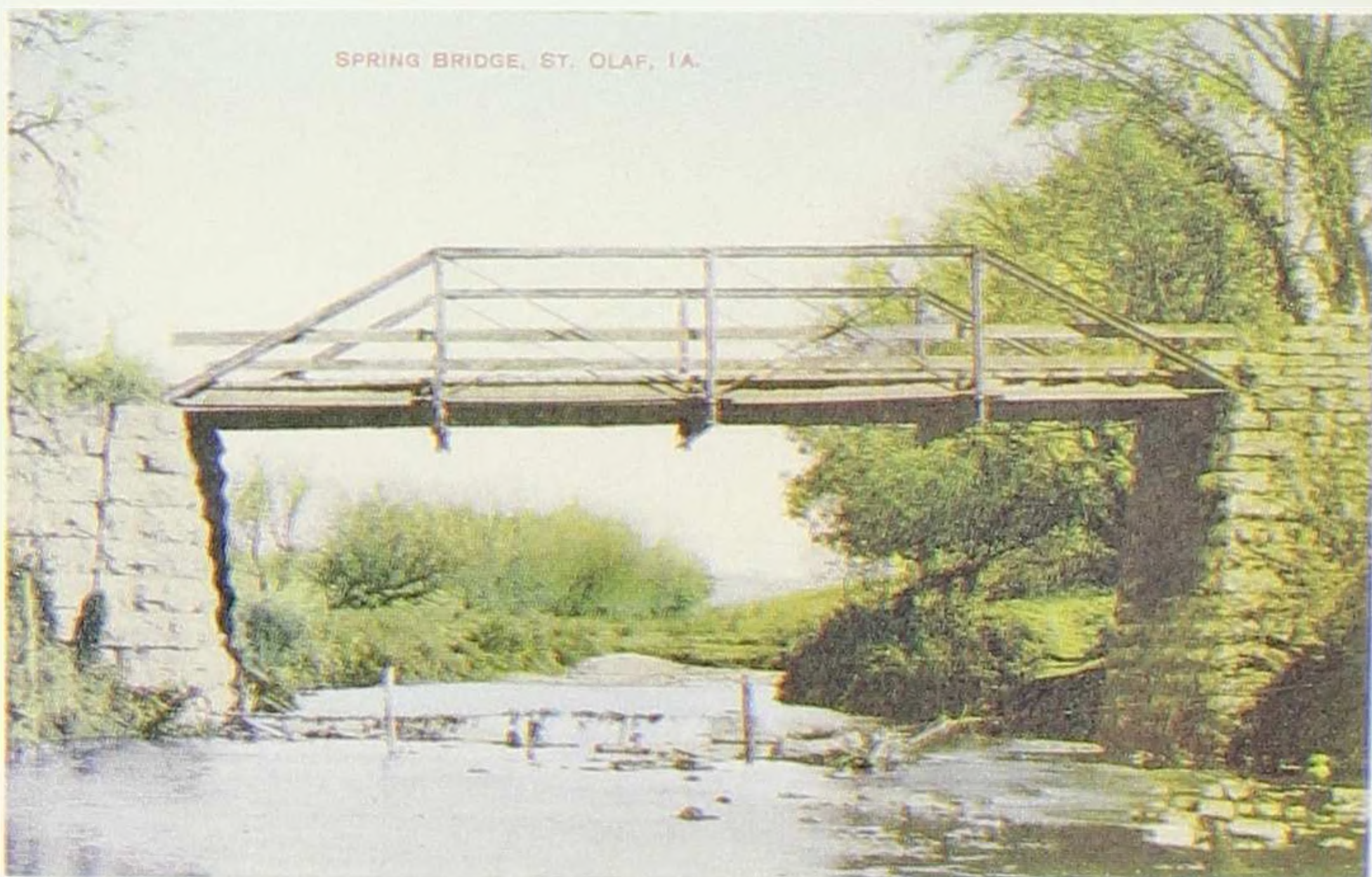
Lumberyards and sawmills played a dynamic role in the spectacular growth of north-east Iowa. The Ed. P. Eberhard Lumber Company at Guttenberg did a thriving business around the turn of the century.



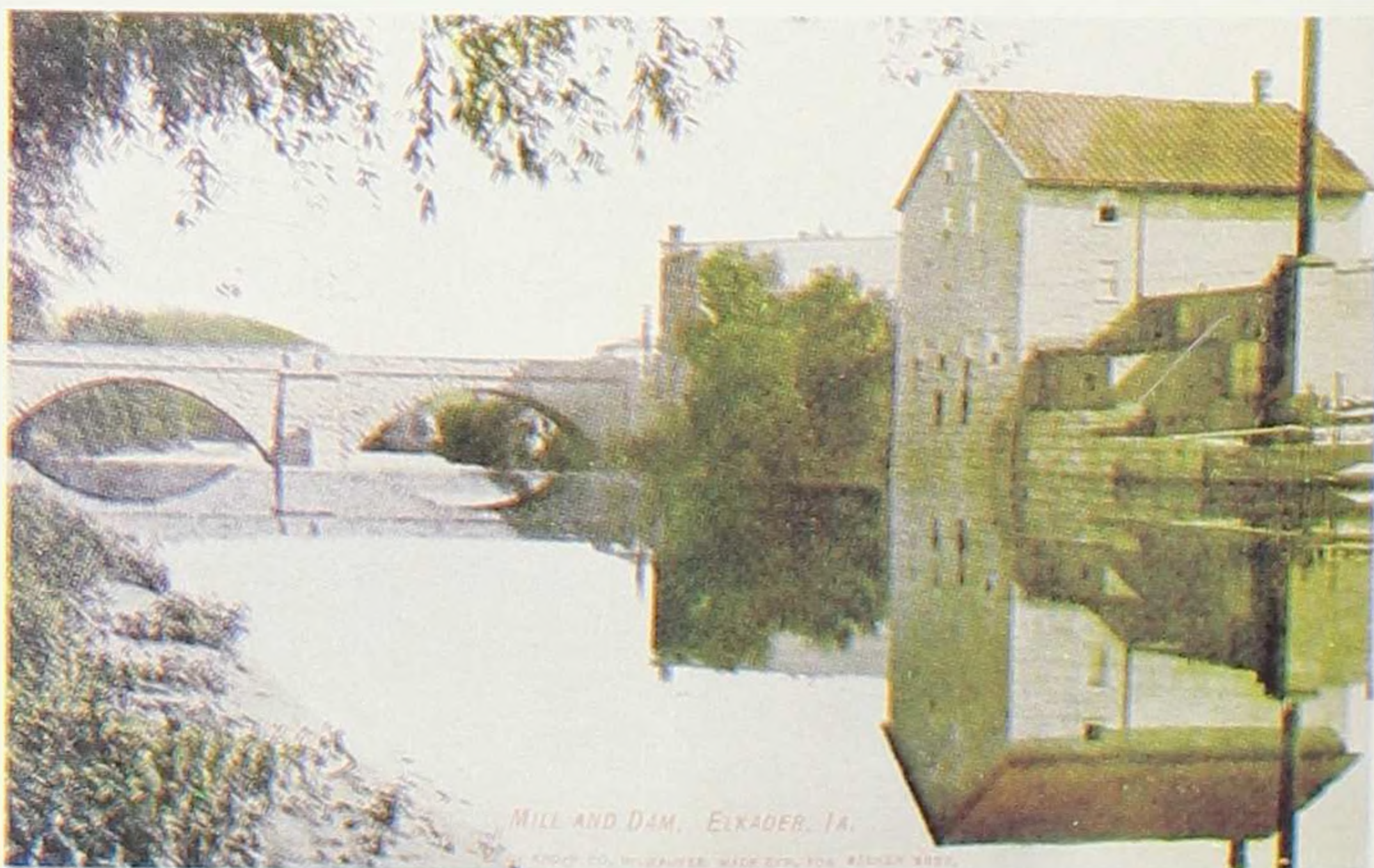
*Guttenberg Press Photo*

The swift-flowing streams in Allamakee and Clayton counties were skirted with timber and accordingly afforded ideal spots for the erection of sawmills of all kinds—water, steam, portable, and horsepower. In 1859 there were 540 sawmills in Iowa. The Wiegand sawmill near Giard is representative of many in the 1900's.





The Spring Bridge at St. Olaf in Clayton County.



The Old Mill, Dam, and Bridge at Elkader.



Lover's Retreat by Moonlight, McGregor Iowa.



Moonlight on the River—Lover's Retreat near McGregor.

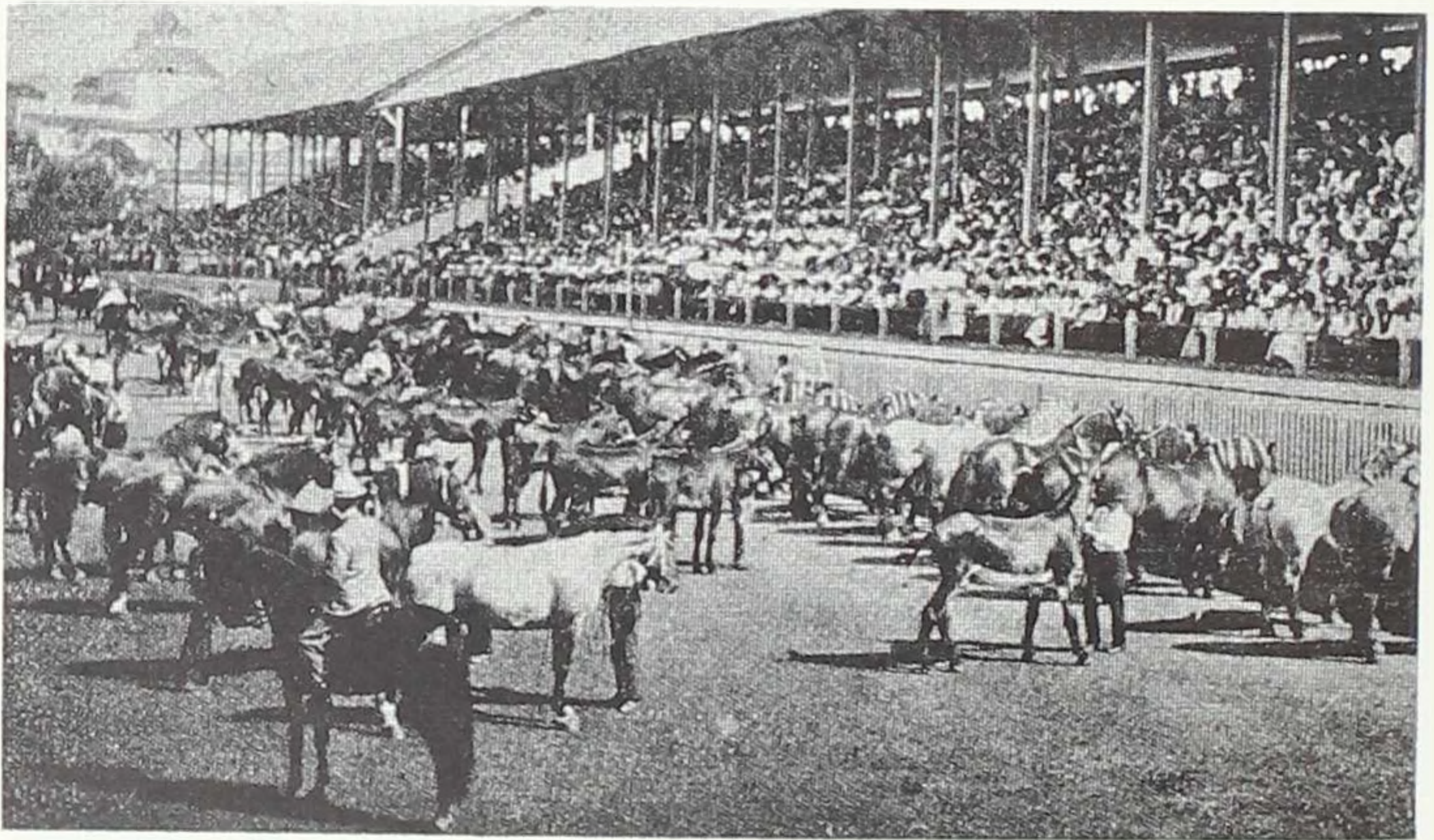
Front St., Guttenberg, Iowa.



Downtown in Quaint Old Guttenberg.



## GOLDEN JUBILEE AT NATIONAL FAIRGROUNDS, 1910



*Garnavillo Historical Society*

The first Clayton County Fair was held in 1854, three weeks before the first State Fair at Fairfield. Although permanently located at National since 1862, rival fairs were started at Strawberry Point (1881) and at Elkader in 1899. The 1966 Fair at National was declared one of the best.

## CLAYTON COUNTY THRESHING SCENE IN 1886



*Garnavillo Historical Society*

Agriculture, livestock, and dairying have always been key industries in northeastern Iowa. Three prairies, the largest of which is High Prairie in the Garnavillo area, afford a deep, rich, black loam, good for intensive cultivation. Stiehl and Wickler had a good crew of threshers out and hard at work in 1886.



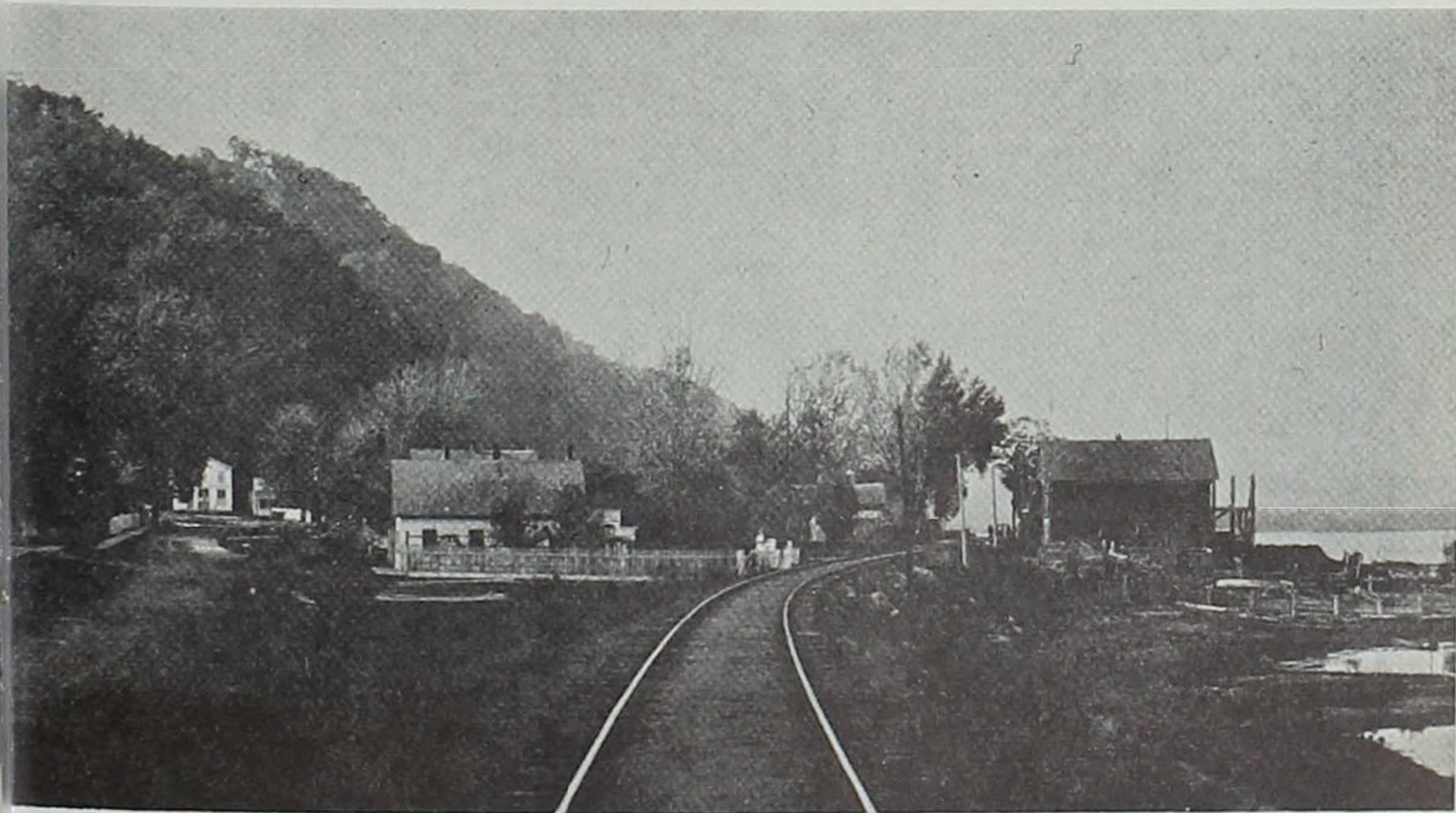
## HOME OF ANDREW CLEMENS IN MCGREGOR



*McGregor Historical Society*

Examples of the work of Sand Artist Andrew Clemens can be seen in the open window on the left. His father's carriage and wagon factory was located next to the home. The elder Clemens arrived in 1858.

## VIEW OF CLAYTON, IOWA, IN EARLY DAYS



*William J. Petersen Photo*

The 117-mile railroad was completed from Dubuque through Clayton and Allamakee counties to La Crescent, Minnesota, in 1871. A post office was established at Clayton in 1851 with John H. Dunkin as the first postmaster.





*Effigy Mounds National Monument Photo*  
Effigy Mounds National Monument above Marquette.



*Effigy Mounds National Monument Photo*  
Mississippi River from Effigy Mounds National Monument.





*Margery Goergen Photo*

Colorful Tapestries Adorn Hills and Valleys Every Fall.

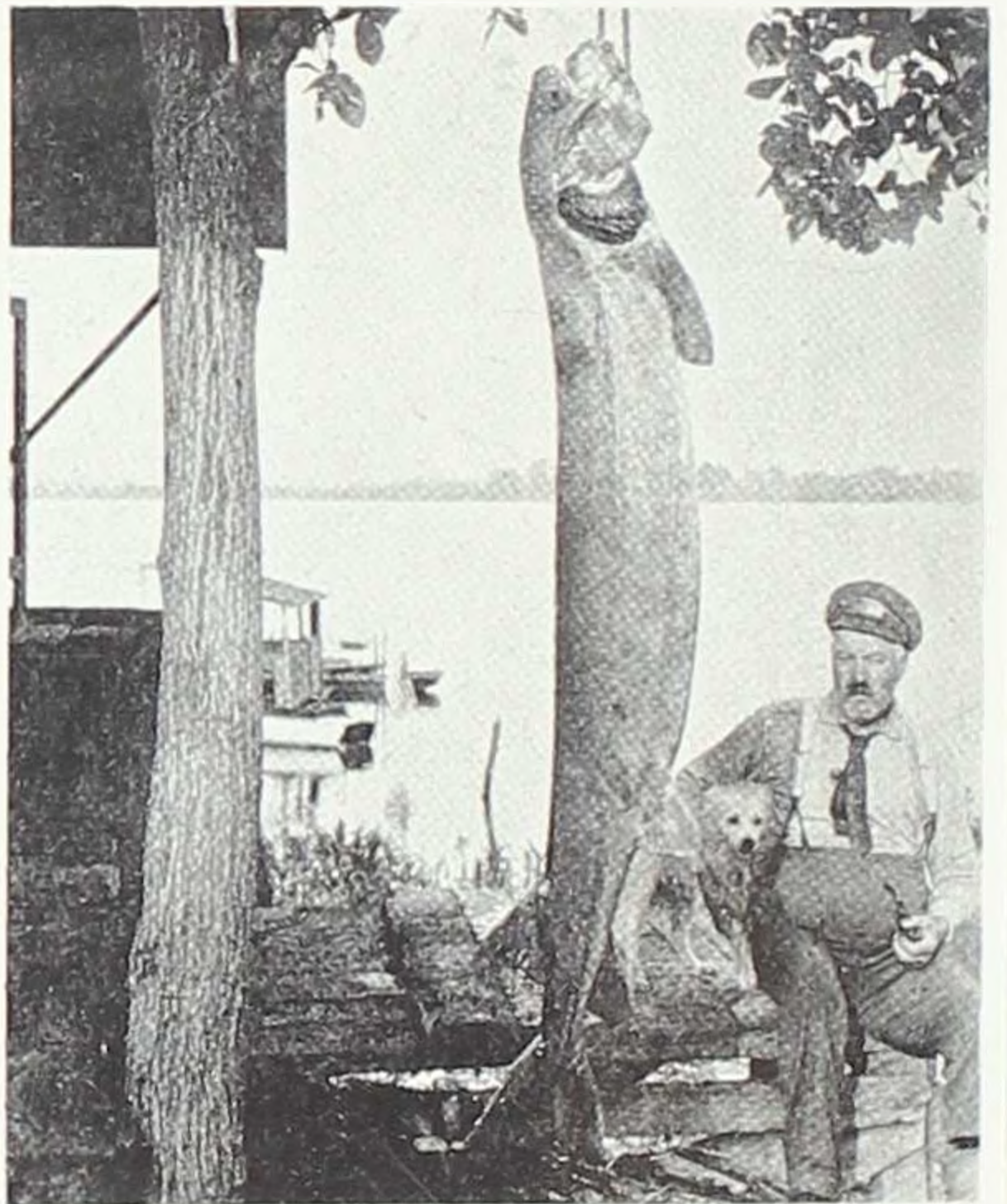


*Margery Goergen Photo*

The Haze of Indian Summer Creates a Land of Enchantment.



## MISSISSIPPI FISHING—FOR FUN AND MONEY



*McGregor Historical Society*

Even the youngsters can catch big ones. Exhibit of this 116-pound fish caused many a "Doubting Thomas" to shake his head. In 1773, however, Peter Pond wrote that he and his men caught three catfish near present-day McGregor. One weighed 115 pounds, the second 100 pounds, while the third weighed only 75 pounds!



*McGregor Historical Society*

Commercial fishermen shipped huge quantities of Mississippi fish to markets in the East. The above catch was depicted on a postcard in 1909. The following year A. C. Larson hauled in 64,000 pounds of fish that filled four refrigerator cars.



## WINTER SPORTS—SKATING AND FISHING



*McGregor Historical Society*

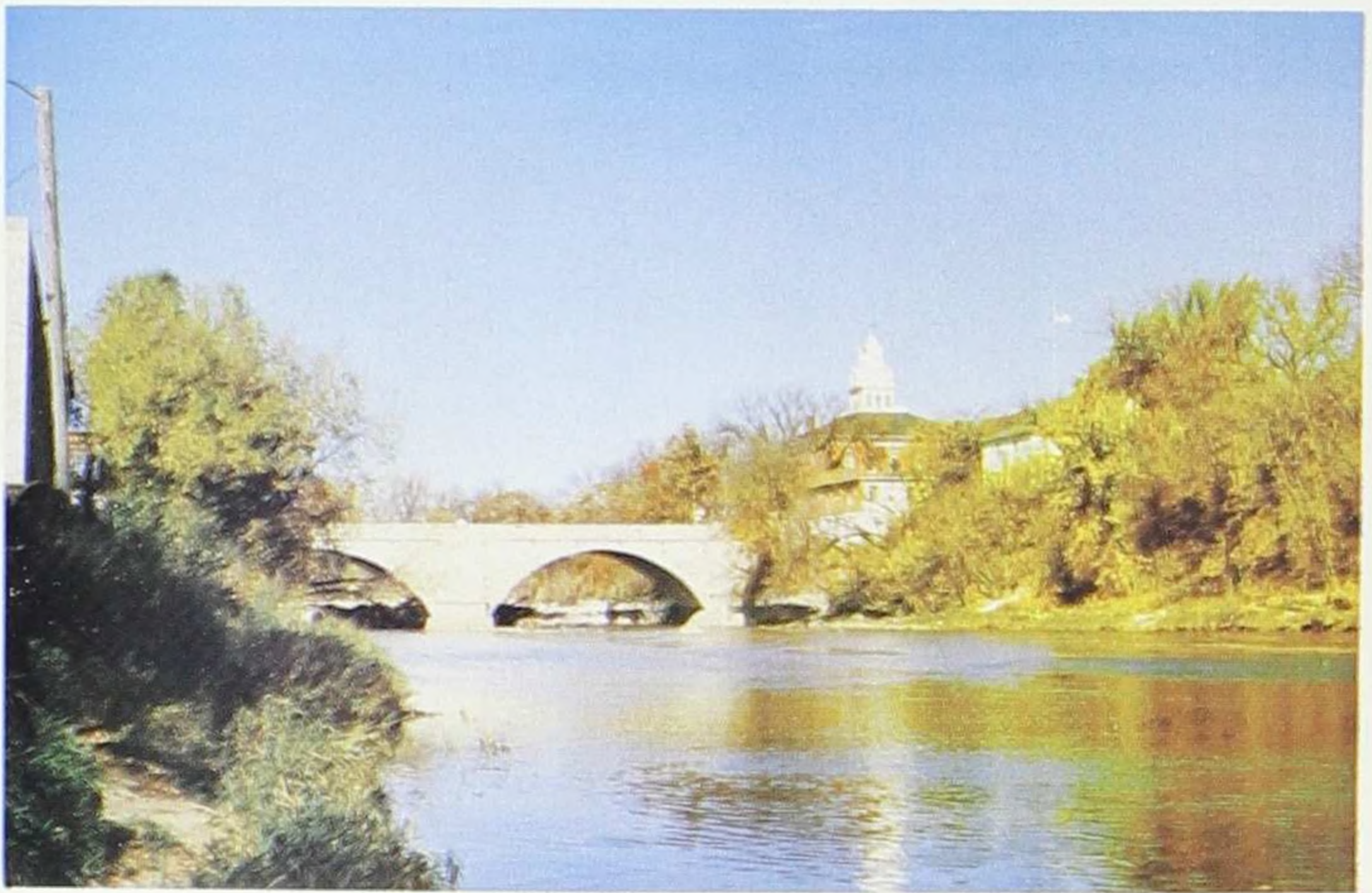
The frozen Mississippi attracts many persons interested in recreation and sports—fishing, ice skating, sailing on iceboats, bobsledding, skiing, and occasionally horse racing.



*Guttenberg Press Photo*

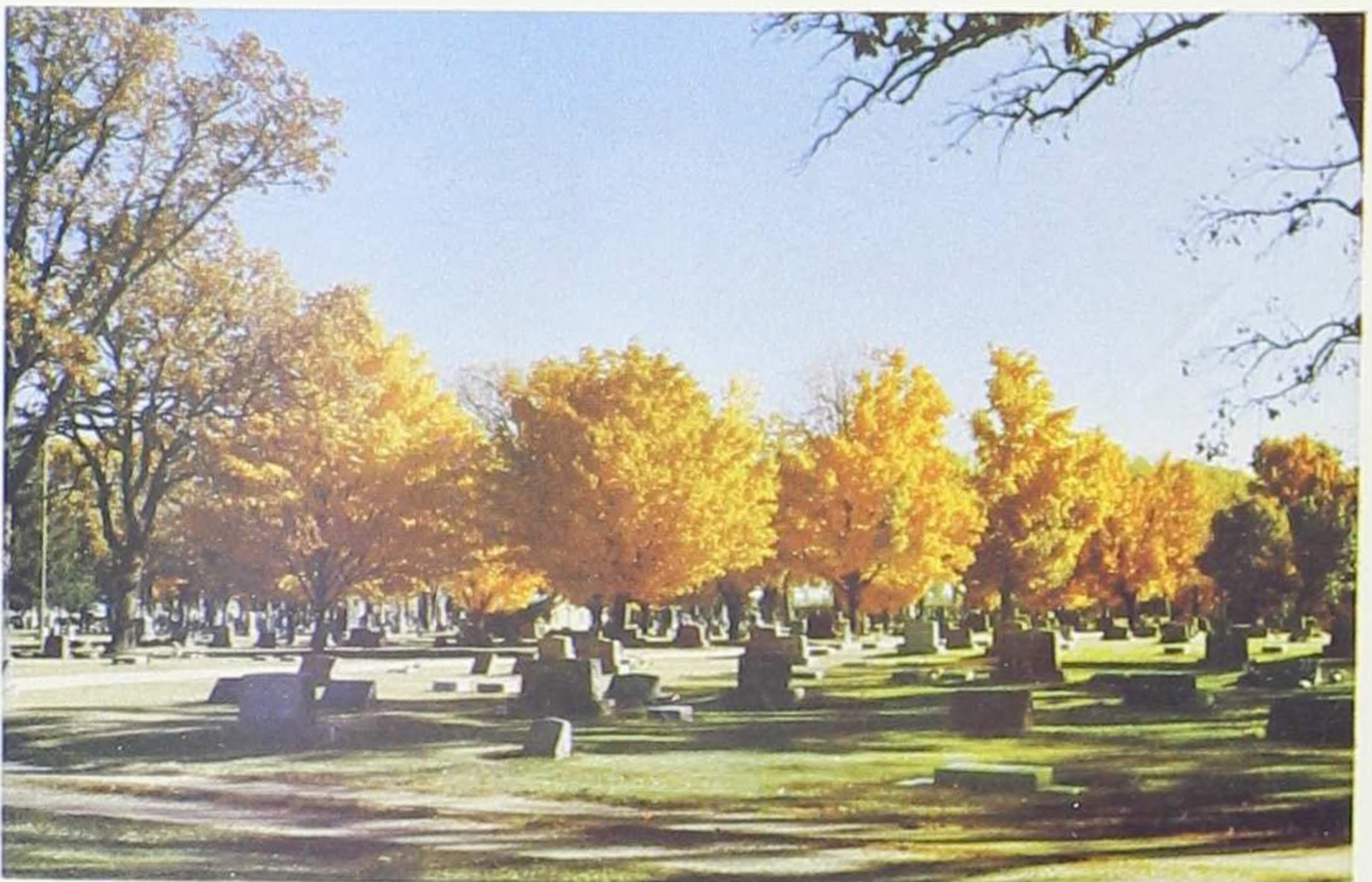
Winter fishing provides fun and food for modern as well as old-time sports enthusiasts. Whole families frequently participate in the fun.





*Chuck Kent Photo*

Famous Arched Bridge at Elkader with Court House in the Rear.



*Chuck Kent Photo*

Cemetery at Strawberry Point Crowned with Fall Foliage.





*Chuck Kent Photo*

Golden October Days Cast Their Spell near Strawberry Point.

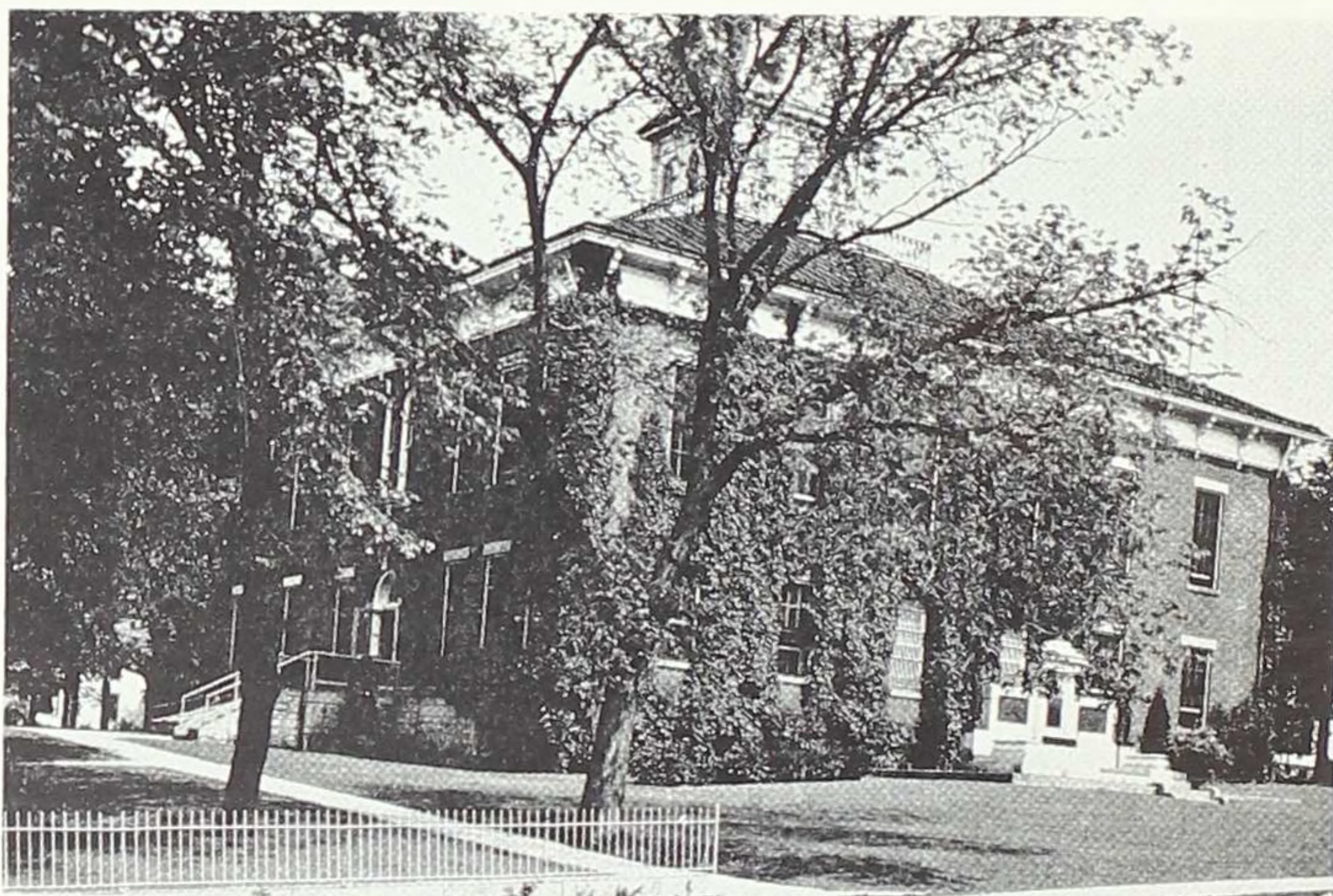


*Chuck Kent Photo*

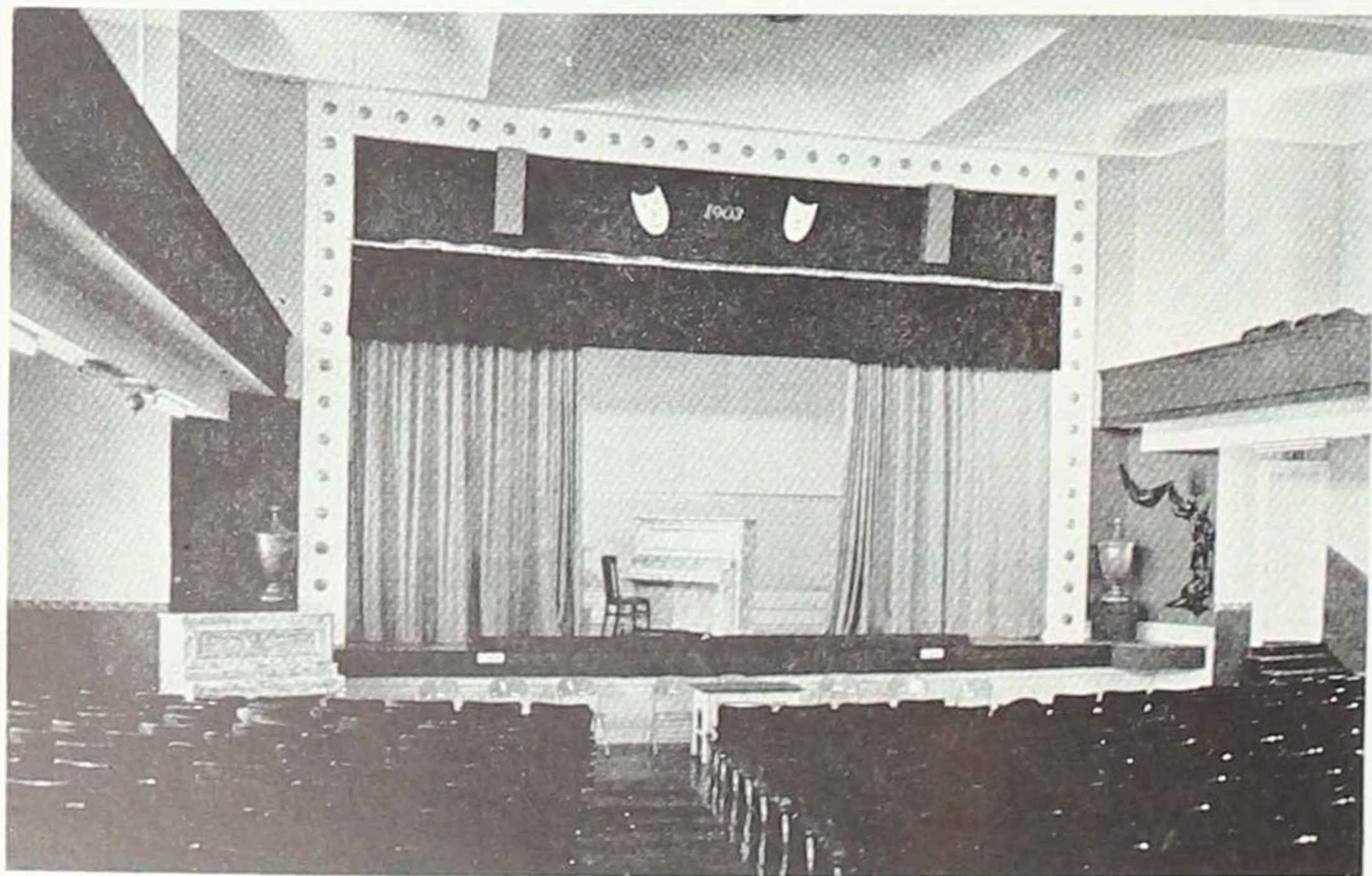
Devil's Backbone State Park near Strawberry Point.



## THE CLAYTON COUNTY COURT HOUSE AT ELKADER



The fight for the county seat was a long and bitter one, with Prairie La Porte (Guttenberg), Jacksonville (renamed Garnavillo), and Elkader, competing between 1840 and 1860. In the latter year Elkader finally became the permanent county seat, beating off subsequent attempts by McGregor and Garnavillo to secure the seat. The court house pictured above was built between 1867 and 1877.



The Opera House in Elkader was completely renovated in 1965 and a series of plays given, including *Dirty Work at the Crossroads* and *Blythe Spirit* presented by the Home Town players and *John Brown's Body* by the Cedar Rapids Little Theater group.





*Garnavillo Historical Society*

St. Peter's German United Evangelical Lutheran Church near Garnavillo. Built in 1858 near Ghost Village of Ceres, the church remains a tourist attraction to this day.



*Guttenberg Press Photo*

Boating has become a very popular Mississippi River sport, and enthusiasts drive from various points to Guttenberg to launch their crafts and spend a pleasant weekend on the Father of Waters.





*Margery Goergen Photo*

A Myriad of Lillies Fill Dreamy Lagoons Formed by Giant Oxbows.



*Margery Goergen Photo*

Trail Riders Rest Their Mounts in Stream in Yellow River State Forest.



about \$600, of wheat, \$21,000; of oats, \$2,500 and of hides, \$175. They are extensive packers of pork, and in looking through their great storehouse of grain and provisions, one feels that Iowa is not, after all, so very poor. Bradley & Co. have purchased 115,000 pounds of pork at a cost of \$6,530. Allen & Southmayd have paid out, since the middle of Autumn, about \$2,000 for hides; nearly as much for pork: twice as much for oats: \$1,500 for wheat, and something for barley. Mr. Hibbard has bought 95,195 pounds of pork, at an average of about five cents per pound, (\$4,759.75;) 6,500 bushels of wheat, at about \$4,550, and a few thousand bushels of oats and other grain. We have made an effort to get the transactions of other commercial houses, but have failed, excepting in one case, the parties not being at home or too busy. Mr. Charles Coy has purchased 4,000 bushels of oats, and a small quantity of wheat and corn. We do not think it is an over estimate to state the amount paid out here the present winter for produce, cannot fall short of \$150,000.

The opening of a railroad from Milwaukee to Prairie du Chien, opposite this town, has given to McGregor facilities for commercial business that were hardly dreamed of a year or two ago. Several business houses on the east side of the river have recently removed to the west side, and stuck their stakes here. Mr. G. C. Cone, an extensive hardware merchant, has just removed from



Milwaukee to this point, and opened a large store, making the third exclusively hardware establishment in the place. We notice at least eight or nine general variety stores. Those of Merrill & Barron, Bradley & Co., Scott & Brother, Dearborn & Jarrett, and one or two others are large and well stocked.

We also notice several fine grocery stores; also two large stores—the property of H. S. Granger and D. K. Hobart—in which boots and shoes *exclusively* are kept. There are four drug stores here; one book store, kept by H. E. Newell; one banking house, Lee & Kinnaird proprietors; half a dozen tailors; two dentists; three jewelers; two hollow-ware merchants; an extensive agricultural ware house, owned by Grant & Peck; a tannery; a brewery; a soap factory; a steam gristmill; a steam planing mill, three steam sawmills, and six lumberyards.

In McGregor is the Bezer Lodge of Masons, and the Itasca Lodge of Odd Fellows. The place has one public school and three select ones. We have had time to visit only one of them, the select school of D. D. Fraser—a first class teacher from Livingston county, New York. He has thirty-five pupils. In all the schools are about one hundred and seventy scholars. We hear the teachers generally highly spoken of.

The North Iowa *Times*, A. P. Richardson, Esq., editor and proprietor, is the ablest and best Demo-



cratic journal in Northern Iowa. The people of McGregor, where it is published, may well feel proud of it.

McGregor has two livery stables, and in one of them, as we have had occasion to know—that of Pearsall & Church—are some fine animals.

Our headquarters are at the McGregor House, W. A. Durham proprietor. We find clean beds, good attention, and an abundance to eat. This house and the American are, we believe, the only first class hotels in the place. The latter house is kept by Scott & Wright, two worthy young men who are rapidly redeeming the once fair name of the American House. We knew Mr. Scott in the Clarendon, at Niagara Falls, two years ago.

The several professions are fully represented in McGregor. We have already spoken of Mr. Wadsworth, pastor of the Congregational Church. H. H. Keith is pastor of the Methodist Church. We have not made his acquaintance.

The physicians are John Low, G. S. Aken, P. G. Parker, J. Field, and H. C. Martin; the lawyers, J. T. Stoneman, Reuben Noble, Willis Drummond, D. Baugh, Elijah Odel, J. W. Van Onman, C. F. Remick, D. Leffingwell, and S. L. Peck. The bar of McGregor, like that of West Union, of which we had occasion to speak a short time ago, embraces more than an average amount of talent. Mr. Noble was Speaker of the House at the meeting of the General Assembly in the winter of



1855-6, and acquitted himself honorably. Mr. Stoneman would have been a member of the last Assembly had he not run—as a “float”—in a district embracing a Democratic stronghold. Party favors, we believe, have been shown to other members of the McGregor Bar—though we know but little of their antecedents. We have found them all very social and agreeable, and they have contributed their share to make our first visit to McGregor extremely pleasant.

Unlike Brick Pomroy, late of the *Horicon Argus*, we have been able to turn round in the one street of McGregor. The weather is warm and very likely the street has expanded. Where McGregor will put all her citizens ten years hence, when she will have fifteen or twenty thousand we are desirous of knowing. But this is an age of inventive genius, and McGregor, the “pent-up Utica” of Iowa, will loosen her apron strings in some way.

*Monona*

February 22, 1859

We have reached one of the highest points in Clayton county, thirteen miles north-west of McGregor, and within two miles of the line of Allamakee county. The site of the village of Monona is beautiful, but the village itself looks a little dilapidated, *just now*. Mud is abundant, and loafers are plenty.—Two lawsuits are in progress here, and the excitement has brought together men



and boys of leisure, seemingly, from remote parts. A stranger would suppose that half of Clayton and Allamakee counties have been raked with a fine tooth comb, and that the contents had been suddenly deposited in Monona Village. Nevertheless, we find several excellent families here; a good public school, with two departments, taught by Mr. and Miss Emery, in a large brick house two stories high; three church organizations, and other signs of enterprise, on the part of some of the people, in a promising direction. The only drawback to the prosperity of the town, that we can discover, is the multiplicity of whisky shops. They must be dried up or Monona will be ruined! The village is surrounded by a rich agricultural district; has an abundance of timber, in the neighborhood; and, purged of whisky, will become a thrifty and happy village, of one or two thousand people in a few years. Its present population is between three and four hundred.

The place has two general variety stores, kept by Evans & Egbert, and Dean, French & Emery; one small grocery; a drug store, by P. B. Mason; two shoe shops; a steam saw mill, the property of Egbert & Slitor; two wagon makers, and other mechanics.

It has no lawyers, but a plenty of "lawing." The physician of the place is Dr. John T. H. Scott, a most estimable man.

Monona has two hotels, the Egbert House and



the Western. At the former, where we are halting for the night, about thirty couples of dancers are busy, just now, in forgetting that one George Washington was ever born. The "beauty" of Monona is gathered here *surely*, and the "chivalry" perhaps. Paul Egbert, Jr., the landlord, is very attentive to strangers, and uses them well.

The McGregor Railroad, it is probable, will pass through Monona. This road has been partially graded, nine miles west of the river, but nothing is being done, just now.—Some day it is to run to Bradford; thence to St. Charles; and beyond the latter place its precise destination, we believe, is not determined. At Bradford, as we stated a short time ago, it will probably form a junction with the Cedar Falls and Minnesota Railroad, and from that point into Floyd, there may, perhaps, be but one track for the two roads.

We have now visited most of the large towns and small villages in Clayton county, and are convinced that this county will long hold a front rank among the counties of Northern Iowa. In wealth it is second only to Dubuque county, its assessed value, in 1858, being, as we learn from Judge Crary of Guttenberg, \$4,700,000. Its population is about twenty thousand; its voters upwards of three thousand.

The Volga and Turkey are the principal rivers in Clayton county. They enter it on the west side, and form a junction in the southeast part.



Good water power is found on both of them. On Howard and Poney creeks, in the central part; on Bloody Run, in the northern part; and on Sny Magill and Buck creeks, in the eastern part, is also found more or less hydraulic power, and several saw and grist mills have been built upon them. In the entire county are fourteen or fifteen flouring or grist mills, most of them propelled by water, and between forty and fifty saw mills of every kind; and yet but a small portion of the water power is improved.

*Hardin*

February 23, 1859

In coming hither, we passed through the village of Hardin, in the extreme northern part of Clayton county. A portion of the village is in Allamakee county. It has four or five stores; half a dozen mechanic shops; a steam saw mill; two schools of high standing; and two church organizations. Norman Chesney, Esq., attends to all cases of silliness, and two physicians to all cases of sickness.

*Clayton*

April 15, 1859

A late start from Dubuque this morning, the early breaking of the tiller rope, causing an hour's delay, and a fierce and sleet-laden wind in our teeth, brought us to the little village of Clayton, fifty-five miles, by water, above Dubuque, late this afternoon. With a red hot stove in both ends of



the boat and an abiding attachment to overcoats and shawls, the few passengers managed to keep comfortable. The high winds and squally heavens seemed to make the wild ducks crazy. Their gyrations through the air would indicate that they were either frightened or insane. Possibly, though, they were merely exercising to keep warm.

On board the steamboat was a man from the State of New York, in the 85th year of his age, bound for Alma, Wisconsin, to pre-empt land! He has three sons living, and two of them are wealthy. One resides in Clyde, N. Y., and is probably worth forty thousand dollars. But neither he nor either of the other sons will give the old gentleman a house! Friends—though not relatives—at Alma offered to assist him if he would bring out a warrant for eighty acres, which he has got hold of in some way; and with a bowed form and a staff in each hand, with three wives in the grave, at the age of eighty-four, he seeks a new home a thousand miles from the resting-place of the cherished dead, and from the living who *should* be his friends.

This venerable man reminds us of an incident of our travels in Michigan five or six years ago. While the railroad train was halting a few moments at Hillsdale, an old gentleman, whose body was bent half way to the earth, crept out of one of the cars, and just as he had crept in again and closed the door after him, a young man, tall, lank



and rustic, turning to the by-standers, yet addressing no one in particular, exclaimed: "By gosh! I guess that old man is going into a new country to start a graveyard!"

The village of Clayton is in the county of the same name, and is the only place of importance in this vicinity, unvisited by us two months ago. It is situated directly on the shore of the Mississippi, in a little "cubby hole" among the huge bluffs, and is completely protected from piercing nor'westers.

The first settler was Frank Smith, a native of Massachusetts. He came here in 1849, and is now one of the proprietors of a steam saw and flouring mill, which was built in 1854.

Thompson, Whittemore & Co. have a steam flouring mill, which has been in operation three or four years, and which turns out a hundred barrels of flour per day. The mill is similar to the water mill at Elkader, owned by Thompson & Davis. The arrangements of both for cleaning grain, for dusting bran, &c., are excellent. Clayton flour stands well in the St. Louis market. Messrs. T. W. & Co. have twenty or thirty thousand bushels of wheat in store. J. A. Brown & Co. have also a large amount, together with other grain. It is estimated that 60,000 bushels of wheat, 25,000 of corn, and about the same amount of oats, have found a shipping port here since the last harvest.

Clayton has one foundry; one turner's shop;



one cooper's shop; one cabinet shop; two wagon and two blacksmith shops; one butcher shop; one tin shop; one bakery; one grocery; three general variety stores, kept by Lorimier & Stearns, S. A. Clark, and J. G. Jerome; and four warehouses, the proprietors of which are J. A. Brown & Co., O. C. Forsyth & Son, Lorimier & Stearns, and Barney Guenzieus.

This village has two hotels. One of them, the Clayton House, is kept by Mr. J. B. Marlatt, an old acquaintance from the shores of Lake Ontario, on the Canada side.

Clayton has one public school and two religious organizations, Methodist and Presbyterian. Mr. Larkin of Garnavillo supplies the Methodist pulpit; Mr. Swartz, the Presbyterian. Gilbert Douglas, Esq., is the attorney of the place. The physicians at Garnavillo, six miles west, supply this village mostly with emetics and other delectable compounds.

A steam ferry boat runs hourly across the river at this point.

Messrs. Keen & Smith, the proprietors of the foundry, are making arrangements to build a steam grist mill, the present season.—Other improvements are under contemplation.

The population of Clayton is between five and six hundred.